

NOVEMBER	
2	WINTER FAIR—Choteau 466-5564
2	BIG TIMBER CHRISTMAS BAZAAR—Big Timber 932-5647
2	HOLIDAY BAZAAR—Butte
2	WINE AND FOOD FESTIVAL—Sidney 482-2120
5	GARDINER LIBRARY BAZAAR—Gardiner 848-7596
8–9	4TH ANNUAL HOLIDAY ART & CRAFT SHOW—Kalispell 449-4790
9	HOLIDAY CRAFT SHOW—Lewistown 428-2316
15–16	DOLL & DOLL HOUSE SHOW & SALE—Livingston 222-2300
15–17	HOLIDAY ANTIQUE SHOW—Great Falls 727-5150
15–12/15	BALD EAGLE MIGRATION—Helena 475-3310 or 475-3319
16	MINING CITY CHARITY BALL—Butte 723-4377
22	HOLIDAY PARADE—Billings 259-5260
22	DOWNTOWN HELENA FALL ART WALK—Helena 447-1535
22–23	HOLIDAY BAZAAR—Livingston 222-2300
23	BIGFORK ELVES DECORATE FOR CHRISTMAS—Bigfork 837-5888
23–24	CRIPPLE CREEK CREATIONS BAZAAR—Butte 782-3191
23–24	CAN/AM SPEEDSKATING TOURNAMENT—Butte 723-5454
26	HOLIDAY CRAFT FAIR—Helena 443-2242
29	CHRISTMAS CITY OF THE NORTH PARADE—Kalispell 752-6166
29	CHRISTMAS PARADE OF LIGHTS—Sidney 482-1916
29	CHRISTMAS STROLL—Anaconda 563-8006
29–12/1	ARTISTS AND CRAFTSMAN CHRISTMAS SHOW—Kalispell 752-0791
30–12/1	SILVER BELLS—Fairview 747-5259
30–12/1	HOLIDAY FESTIVAL OF ARTS AND CRAFTS—Bozeman 582-3270
30–12/1	CHRISTMAS SHOW AT PIONEER TOWN—Scobey 487-5559

DECEMBER	
1	CHRISTMAS TO REMEMBER—Laurel 628-8105
2–24	HOLIDAY MARKET ROOM 96—Lewistown 538-8278
5	TOWNSEND CHRISTMAS STROLL—Townsend 266-3325
5	FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS—Belgrade 388-1616
5–7	FESTIVAL OF TREES—Butte 494-4333
5–8	FESTIVAL OF TREES—Billings 252-9799
6	CHRISTMAS STROLL—Lewistown 538-5436
6	CHRISTMAS STROLL—Billings 259-5260
6	CHRISTMAS STROLL—Butte 723-5042
6	CHRISTMAS STROLL—Harlowton 632-4694
6	VALLEY INVITATIONAL & HOLIDAY SHOPPE—Kalispell 755-5268
6	CHRISTMAS STROLL—Great Falls 453-6151
6	NIGHT OF LIGHTS—Columbia Falls 892-PLAY
6	CHRISTMAS IN PARADISE—Livingston 222-0850
6–7	CONRAD CHRISTMAS STROLL—Conrad 278-5343
6–8	WINTER GUN SHOW—Hamilton 777-5861
6–8	CATCH THE MAGIC—Hamilton 363-4218
7	CHRISTMAS STROLL—Bozeman 586-4008
7	FOURTH ANNUAL CHRISTMAS STROLL—Havre 265-4383
7	OLD FASHIONED CHRISTMAS FAIR—Livingston 222-8677
7	PANCAKE BREAKFAST—Lincoln 362-4335
7	HOLIDAY CHRISTMAS SHOW—Lewistown 538-2212
7–8	TOYLAND CHRISTMAS—Sidney 482-3500
7–8	KICK-OUT-THE-KINKS BENEFIT SKI RACE—Essex 888-5700
9–15	SLED DOG RACES—Anaconda 563-2675
10–16	DOUG SMITH MEMORIAL DOWNHILL RACE—Whitefish 862-2900
13	CHRISTMAS STROLL—Whitefish 862-9199
13	CHRISTMAS COMES TO LIFE—Libby 293-4167

14	CHRISTMAS STROLL—Three Forks 285-4556
14–15	GUN SHOW—Bozeman 582-3270
15	SANTA'S GIFT DRIVE—Neihart 236-5522
20–22	SNOWBOARD CAMP—Whitefish 862-2909
21	AMERICAN LEGION/VFW TURKEY DINNER AND SLEIGH RIDE—Twin Bridges 684-5259
21	CHRISTMAS BALL—Livingston 222-2300
22	HOLIDAY WITH PARKS AND RECREATION—Missoula 721-7275
24	CHRISTMAS EVE TORCHLIGHT PARADE WITH SANTA—Whitefish 862-2900
24	CHRISTMAS EVE TORCHLIGHT PARADE & FESTIVITIES—Big Sky 995-5000
28–29	ROOT BEER CLASSIC—Polebridge 752-2929
31	TORCHLIGHT PARADE & FIREWORKS DISPLAY—Marysville 449-3746
31	FIRST NIGHT MISSOULA—Missoula 549-4755
31	SNOWMOBILE POKER RUN—Lincoln 362-4304
31	NEW YEAR'S EVE TORCHLIGHT PARADE—Whitefish 862-2900
31	NEW YEAR'S EVE FIREWORKS DISPLAY AND CELEBRATION—Big Sky 995-5000

JANUARY	
4	SNOWMOBILE POKER RUN—Lincoln 362-4335
5	MSRA SNOWMOBILE ICE DRAGS—Lincoln 362-4078
10–11	AG DAYS AND TRADE SHOW—Sidney 482-1206
10–12	MONTANA PRO RODEO CIRCUIT FINALS—Great Falls 727-8115
10–12	KANDAHAR CUP—Whitefish 862-2905
11	PANCAKE BREAKFAST—Lincoln 362-4335
12–14	WOMEN'S WORKSHOPS—Whitefish 862-2909
16–18	MAGIE—Great Falls 761-7600
17–19	BILLINGS HOME AND GARDEN SHOW/HEALTH & FITNESS EXPO—Billings 245-0404
18	MOONLIGHT SNOWMOBILE POKER RUN—Lincoln 362-4335
18–19	NORTHERN DIVISION MASTERS RACE/USSA FREESTYLE EVENT—Whitefish 862-2905
18–25	MONTANA WINTER FAIR—Bozeman 582-3270
23	WINTER MICROBREW FESTIVAL—Whitefish 862-2905
25–26	THE SEELEY LAKE 100—Seeley Lake 677-2616
31–2/2	NORTHERN RODEO ASSOCIATION FINALS—Billings 252-1122

FEBRUARY	
1–2	SNOWBOARD JAM—Missoula 549-9777
1–2	MONTANA POWDER 8s CHAMPIONSHIP—Bozeman 587-2111
1–9	FROST FEVER/WINTERFEST—Missoula 721-PARK
1–3/30	WINTERNATIONAL X SPORTS FESTIVAL—Butte 494-5595 or 800-735-6814
7	COWTOWN BEEF BREEDERS SHOW, CRAFT EXPO & AG TRADE SHOW—Miles City 232-2890
7–8	FORESTER'S BALL—Missoula 543-2558
7–9	WHITEFISH WINTER CARNIVAL—Whitefish 862-3501
7–9	LIVINGSTON GUN SHOW—Big Timber 932-5380
8–9	U.S. JUNIOR NATIONAL LONG TRACK CHAMPIONSHIPS—Butte 723-5454
14–21	RACE TO THE SKY SLED DOG RACE—Helena 442-4008
15–16	LONE TREE GUN SHOW—Sidney 482-1916
15–16	CABIN FEVER DAYS—Lincoln 362-4078
16	SNOWMOBILE SNOCROSS RACES—Lincoln 362-4849
20–22	MONTANA AGRI-TRADE EXPOSITION—Billings 245-0404
22	SNOWMOBILE POKER RUN—Lincoln 362-4335
22–23	WILD WEST SHRED O'FEST SNOWBOARD COMPETITION—Bozeman 587-2111
22–23	SNOWBOWL CUP GELANDE CHAMPIONSHIP—Missoula 549-9777
22–23	ADVANCED SKIING SEMINAR—Whitefish 862-2911
22–23	NORTHWEST TELEMAR CHAMPIONSHIPS—Whitefish 862-2905
27–3/1	GLENDIVA AGRI-TRADE EXPOSITION—Glendive 365-6781

28–3/2	WORLD JUNIOR LONG TRACK SPEED SKATING CHAMPIONSHIPS FOR MEN & LADIES—Butte 723-5454
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MARCH	
1	GRAPE EXPECTATIONS WINE AND FOOD FESTIVAL—Whitefish 862-2900
1–2	NORTHERN DIVISION FREESTYLE CHAMPIONSHIP—Missoula 549-9777
2	SNOWMOBILE SNOCROSS RACES—Lincoln 362-4849
2–4	WOMEN'S WORKSHOPS—Whitefish 862-2909
7	LACC TASTE OF LIVINGSTON—Livingston 222-0850
7–9	SPRING GUN SHOW—Hamilton 777-5861
8	EQUINE EXPO—Helena 444-6912
9	SNOWBOWL HEXATHLON—Missoula 549-9777
13–16	BIG MOUNTAIN DOUG BETTERS WINTER CLASSIC—Whitefish 862-2911 or 862-2900
14–16	CABIN FEVER GUN SHOW—Bozeman 582-3270
14–16	WORLD SNOWMOBILE EXPO—West Yellowstone 646-7701
15	NORTH DAKOTA DOWNHILL—Missoula 549-9777
15	IRISH FAIR AND MUSIC FESTIVAL—Libby 293-8202
17	ST. PATRICK'S DAY EVENTS—Butte 494-5595
17	ST PATRICK'S DAY PARADE—Anaconda 563-2909
19–22	C.M. RUSSELL AUCTION OF ORIGINAL WESTERN ART—Great Falls 761-6453
20	WAITRESS CUP—Whitefish 862-2900
22	PINHEAD CLASSIC—Bozeman 587-2111
22	MANNEQUIN JUMPING—Neihart 236-5522
22–23	7TH ANNUAL SNOW RODEO AND SPRING SKI RACE—Essex 888-5700
22–23	KING OF THE MOUNTAIN DUAL SLALOM—Whitefish 862-2905
27–29	WESTERN INVITATIONAL TOURNAMENT—Lewistown 538-7629 or 538-3794
28–29	NILE BUDLIGHT CUP SERIES BULL RIDE—Billings 256-2495
28–30	NW MONTANA ARMS COLLECTORS GUN SHOW—Kalispell 755-3980
29	MONTANA STATE MOGUL CHAMPIONSHIPS—Whitefish 862-2905

FROM MONTANA

The diversity of events, places and people in Montana is almost as wide as the state itself. We hope to give you a taste of that diversity with this quarterly newsletter. In addition, my office offers these services to editors, writers and producers.

Visual Materials
Color slides, 8 x 10" B/W photos, and stock video footage are available for editorial use.

Writer/Photographer Referrals
We can put you in contact with many of Montana's most talented and experienced freelance writers and photographers.

Editorial Copy/Calendar of Events
We'll provide background information or editorial copy for many subjects. We also maintain a calendar of events for the entire state.

Individual Attention
If you need the latest vacation guide and road map of Montana, a liaison with other government agencies, or detailed information to fit a specific story angle, we're here to assist you.

Victor Bjornberg
Publicity Coordinator
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FEATURE

Showdown 60 YEARS OF SKIING

Untold Story Leads From Montana



G. WILTSE

WINTER 1996–97
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Ski the Future: At Red Lodge Mountain

The next generation of ski towns” and “one of the coolest mountain towns in the West” are two recent descriptions of Red Lodge, Montana. This town of 2,000 year-round residents is nestled on the north side of the Beartooth Mountain Range, Montana’s tallest. Part of the reason for Red Lodge’s reputation lies just six miles up into the Beartooths. Here you’ll find Red Lodge Mountain Ski Area. Already famous for its spring skiing, Red Lodge Mountain is now getting a lot of attention for its ambitious 10-year, \$21 million expansion program.

For the 1997 ski season, Red Lodge’s skiable acreage is doubled with the addition of 12 new intermediate and expert ski runs through the chutes and glades of the Cole Creek drainage. Two high-speed detachable

quad chairlifts will serve this area and the addition of mountain-top-to-bottom snowmaking equipment ensures that snow sport enthusiasts will find Red Lodge more exciting than ever.

For folks worried that this “big time” expansion means “big time” prices, Red Lodge officials say lift tickets will stay under \$30 with family packages (4 persons, 3 ski days/3 nights lodging) available for \$131 per person. The “next generation” is looking good!

Over the next decade, Red Lodge Mountain will be adding on-mountain accommodations, restaurants, conference facilities and cross-country, mountain biking and horseback riding trails. For more information, call Red Lodge Mountain 406-446-2610.

Three Montana Ski Areas Ranked Tops



TRAVEL MONTANA

BIG SKY: A third high-speed quad lift will help get more skiers from the base area up the mountain. An on-mountain restaurant will keep skiers and snowboarders energized for the 4,180 feet of vertical drop (#1 in the U.S.) Big Sky offers. Big Sky's new skier service building is the final feature of the resort's biggest capital improvement year ever. Find out more by calling 800-348-4486.

The votes are in and three Montana ski areas are among the fifty best in North America. SNOW COUNTRY Magazine's annual ski area ranking puts Montana's Big Sky Ski & Summer Resort at the #1 spot in North America for "elbow room"; The Big Mountain near Whitefish gets top honors for scenery and Bozeman's Bridger Bowl is in the top ten for value ("It's cheap and steep"). SNOW COUNTRY readers also gave these three Montana ski areas high marks for terrain, snow quality, steep runs, ski schools and children's programs.

The "best" are getting better in 1997. Here's what's new at these three areas.

THE BIG MOUNTAIN: Nearing its 50th anniversary (1998), The Big Mountain has added another 400 acres of prime powder terrain to its 3,000 acre winter recreation fun zone. Big Mountain's Cat Skiing Area is larger and on-mountain Ski Valet services debut in 1997. For more information call 406-862-1900.

BRIDGER BOWL: A new on-mountain chalet offering full-scale food service will open in Bridger's Deer Park and the new fixed-grip quad chair lift will be in its second year of hustling skiers and snowboarders up to Bridger's great terrain. Contact Bridger at 800-223-9609. ∞

Ski Two States at Lost Trail Powder Mountain

Want to ski Montana and Idaho without having to spend hours traveling between resorts? Lost Trail Powder Mountain is your place. Visitors to this western Montana ski area have been doing the "two state ski" since 1938, says Bill Grasser, Lost Trail's owner/operator. Powder Mountain straddles the Montana/Idaho border atop Lost Trail Pass, just off US 93 at the south end of the scenic Bitterroot Valley. About 60% of the ski area is in Montana, 40% slopes down into Idaho.

Powder Mountain has been a local ski area throughout its history, "but we don't turn anyone away," adds Grasser. And have those locals been served well! Every year, over 25 feet of snow (much of it the pillow soft, laugh-as-you-ski sort of snow) covers the mountain's 400 developed acres. Access to the area's 18 runs is just \$17 for adults, \$9 for kids, under 6 free.



WILLIAM SALLAZ

Yes, those are 1997 prices!

"My philosophy has been to keep 'em skiing," explains Grasser. "A \$17 lift ticket does that and we hope to stay in the \$20 range with our new expansion plans because skiing is just too good of a sport to do only occasionally."

Grasser and crew plan to expand the ski area north onto Saddle Mountain, a ridge and mountainside offering expert terrain on top and plenty of good intermediate runs below. The expansion, which will double Lost Trail's developed area, is just beginning so completion is a couple years down the road. In the meantime, stop by for a two-state ski treat at Lost Trail Powder Mountain. For an added bonus, there are natural hot springs and accommodations within minutes of the ski area. ∞

Showdown 60 YEARS OF DOWN-HOME SKIING



PHOTOS COURTESY OF SHOWDOWN

the years is maintain the ski area's friendly, "down home" personality where Carhartts (farm and ranch workwear) are just as acceptable on the slopes as brand name ski fashions. They've also created an active youth and beginning skiers program along with keeping lift rates below \$25.

Showdown's 60th Anniversary kicks off with a celebration on opening day in mid-December. A variety of promotions are planned throughout the year. For more information about what Showdown has to offer, call 800-433-0022. ∞

Joe Taylor was skiing the slopes of Showdown before the central Montana ski area ever existed. He and a buddy ran a trapline from their Little Belt Mountain home in Neihart up past Showdown's current location off Kings Hill Pass. "We'd walk up, pack the snow down as we went and then do a little skiing." That was before 1936 when a rope tow was installed marking Showdown's first development.

Sixty years later, Joe Taylor still skis at Showdown. He doesn't hesitate to say how much nicer it is with the machine grooming and the triple and double chairlifts operating there today. While the skier services have expanded, Joe says one essential has stayed the same: "The snow is consistently good."

Showdown's current owner/operator, George Willett echoes Joe about the dependability of the area's annual 20 feet of quality snow. "We'd like to take credit for that, but it's the man upstairs who is doing an excellent job for us there." What George and the Showdown staff have done over



Snowmobiling Montana's High Country

We're going to let you in on a little secret. If you want some great backcountry, high altitude snowmobiling on trails and play areas maintained by dedicated local snowmobile clubs, then you need to visit Montana's Pioneer Mountains and the Lincoln area.

Lincoln is in the middle of Montana's Rocky Mountains, between Great Falls and Missoula along US 200. The Ponderosa Snow Warriors Club maintains 250 miles of trail through the surrounding public forest lands and operates a clubhouse just outside of town. From the clubhouse, sledders can head just about any direction for some great high country snowmobiling. There's the scenic trails over Huckleberry Pass and Dalton Mountain, Alice Creek's trails and play areas, and the advanced challenges of climbing Stonewall Mountain. Rental and guiding services are available and the Snow Warriors fill the winter with poker runs, moonlight rides and social gatherings at the clubhouse. Contact: Lincoln Ranger District, 406-362-4265.

The Pioneer Mountains are near Dillon in southwestern Montana. Sporting some of the tallest peaks in Montana, this area



TRAVEL MONTANA

gets snow early and keeps it late. Three area snowmobile clubs groom 200 miles of trail. A highlight of the Pioneers is a trail system that connects the seemingly endless series of open meadow parks neatly separated from one another by forested glades. The ghost town of Coolidge and remnants of other backcountry mining cabins are found along the Pioneer's trails. There are plenty of advanced riding areas and for wide-open trail riding, it's hard to beat the Pioneer Mountain's Scenic Byway, an unplowed road cutting a 42-mile path through the area. Rentals and guiding services are found at Polaris and Dillon. Contact: Dillon Ranger Station, 406-683-3900. ∞

Cross-Country Skiing in West Yellowstone

Maybe it's Montana's laid back attitude. Maybe Montana is big enough that everyone is welcome to do their own thing as long as they respect others. Whatever it is, Montana's the kind of place where the "Snowmobile Capital of the World" also offers some of the finest cross-country trail skiing around. We're talking about West Yellowstone.

"More and more skiers are coming all the time," says Scott Carsley, an avid skier and partner in West Yellowstone's snowcoach/guiding service, Yellowstone Alpen Guides.

Scott says the community's free groomed trail system is only one of the drawing cards: "Number one, we have good early snow at a reasonable elevation (about 6,600 feet). Our trails are gentle, rolling trails with no extreme terrain. And we have some

very scenic vistas, particularly on the new trails we're developing." He adds that neighboring Yellowstone Park's geyser basins and Canyon area are favorite skier trips.

The U.S. Olympic Ski Team knows what West Yellowstone offers. Every November, they train on the community's 30 km Rendezvous Trail Complex. Also in November, citizen racers and recreational skiers get a chance to learn from the best when former Olympic coach Torbjorn Karlsen and other experts lead multi-day skiing clinics and a week-long camp for all ages and skill levels (November 24-30, 1996).

Other community ski events include the monthly "SPAM Cup" races, fun citizen races with winners receiving cans of SPAM products. "One can usually lasts us a whole season because the winners always seem to donate them back," Scott reports.

The Rendezvous Ski Race (March 8, 1997) is a more serious (but fun) event that involved 500 skiers in 1996 competing on venues ranging from 2 km to 50 km.

For casual touring or fun racing, check out West Yellowstone's cross-country skiing opportunities (West Yellowstone Chamber, 406-464-7701). ∞



TRAVEL MONTANA